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ABSTRACT

Prior to implementation of a supervisory staff development program, it is necessary to review current literature in the field of educational administration in order to define specific elements (domains) of the supervisory knowledge base. A qualitative research study involving a review of relevant literature yielded 13 primary domains or categories of knowledge: organizational management; instructional leadership; instructional management; development of school and community support; interpersonal and human relations skills; communication skills; school climate; staff evaluation; material and financial resource allocation; school curriculum; staff development; educational research skills; and student guidance, management, and development. A strategy was designed to field test the validity of making these 13 domains the foundation of a knowledge base for supervisory/administrator staff development. The strategy involves administering a survey, "Inventory of Staff Development Priorities," to new and experienced supervisors, having them rank the importance of the domains, and analyzing the data. This report proposes that the knowledge base identified in this study, as well as the results of analysis of the survey, serve as the foundation for a comprehensive induction program for new supervisors and administrators in New York City. A set of nine guidelines to assist in program design is included. The bibliography includes 33 resources identified in the search for literature relevant to an administrator/supervisor knowledge base which formed the basis for this study. (IAH)

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DEVELOPING THE KNOWLEDGE BASE FOR SUPERVISOR INDUCTION AND PROFESSIONAL GROWTH: VALIDATING THE MODEL

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1. Overview/Background

Overview

A recent publication Principals for Our Changing Schools (1990), National Commission for the Principalship notes that "every educational reform report of the 1980's concludes that the United States cannot have excellent schools without excellent leaders." The report further indicates that, although there is little consensus in the debates of the 1990's concerning schooling "most observers agree that the principal plays a key role in determining school effectiveness." (National Commission for the Principalship, 1990, p. 1)

It is not surprising to note that the National Commission for the Principalship recognizes the importance of strong administrative leadership as a primary ingredient in shaping effective schools. The body of research and practice known as "effective schools" has also endorsed this concept. For example, the first of Ronald Edmonds' five correlates of effective schools is "strong administrative leadership." (AASA, 1992, p. 7)

The development of strong administrative leadership is viewed as a continuous process which begins with the "university pre-service component charged with teaching the

structure of the discipline of educational administration and serving as the research arm of the profession." However, "the quest for scholarship should never be in isolation from in-service continuous professional growth activities for practicing administrators." (Hoyle, English, Steffy, 1990, p. 5)

Accepting the view that supervisory staff development does not end when the potential supervisor/administrator candidate completes the prescribed program of preparation at the university level, it is important to examine the nature and content of the second part of the continuum, in-service supervisory staff development, a process that allows for the continual growth of on-the-job supervisors. The major premise of this paper is that, prior to the implementation of a supervisory staff development program, it is necessary to define the knowledge base for this program by reviewing current literature in the field of educational administration, in order to define specific elements (domains) of this supervisory knowledge base.

Background

Leadership for the development of a Research-Based Synthesis of Domains for Supervisor/Administrator Staff Development was provided by Dr. Donald Singer, President of the Council of Supervisors and Administrators, New York City Public Schools. In a recent agreement concluded as a result of collective bargaining, it was agreed that "the Council of

Supervisors and Administrators and the New York City Board of Education would establish a joint committee which will undertake a study to seek out and put into place a high quality prescriptive evaluation and professional growth system." Prior to the formation of this joint committee, the Council of Supervisors and Administrators concluded that it was necessary to conduct a qualitative research study to determine the knowledge base necessary for supervisory success in the 1990's and beyond. The information gathered from the aforementioned study would serve as the content base for supervisory staff development.

The participants in this project are the Department of Educational Leadership and Administration, Long Island University and the Council of Supervisors and Administrators. The unique nature of this project is that union leadership has made a total commitment to the professional development of membership, viewing its role beyond the traditional one of negotiating for salary increases and fringe benefits for members of the collective bargaining unit.

2. Research Design

2.1 Contacts with national and state organizations

The first step undertaken in the development of the research project involved contacts with a number of

resource persons from national and state organizations, who would be aware of existing materials that describe the knowledge base for a supervisory staff development program. In addition, the authors wished to ascertain whether these materials had a research base.

Representative contacts are cited, as follows. Dr. Samuel Sava, Executive Director, National Association of Elementary School Principals provided a document entitled Proficiencies for Principals (1991). The foreword to this document indicated that the material combined the findings of research and the practical experience of on-line administrators. An official of the New York State Department of Education shared with us Competencies for New School Leaders developed by the Northeast Common Market Project. This material listed generic leadership skills and provided an additional viewpoint concerning leadership competencies necessary for success as a school leader.

Other preliminary steps included contacts with the American Association of School Administrators (A.A.S.A.) and the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (A.S.C.D.) to obtain the most recent material published by these organizations concerning the knowledge base necessary for new school supervisors.

2.2 E.R.I.C. Search

An E.R.I.C. search for articles using the following descriptors was conducted. Figure 1 lists these E.R.I.C. descriptors and number of articles initially surveyed.

Figure 1

E.R.I.C. DESCRIPTORS AND NUMBER OF ARTICLES

Descriptors	Number of articles surveyed
Administrator education and administrator effectiveness	39
Administrator training and administrator effectiveness	5
Management development and urban	45
Administrator education and urban	19
Administrator characteristics and urban	15
Principal and in-service	34
Total number of articles	151

2.3 Major resources

A review of the 151 articles cited in the E.R.I.C. search and the materials received from national education

organizations resulted in the identification of thirty-three (33) major references which appear in the bibliography (Appendix B). Material from these major resources was used to construct the Research-Based Synthesis of Domains for Supervisor/Administrator Staff Development.

3. Research-Based Synthesis of Domains for Supervisor/Administrator Staff Development

A review of the thirty three (33) major resources yielded the following thirteen primary domains (categories):

1. Organizational Management
2. Instructional Leadership
3. Instructional Management
4. Development of School and Community Support
5. Interpersonal and Human Relation Skills
6. Communication Skills
7. School Climate
8. Staff Evaluation
9. Material and Financial Resource Allocation
10. School Curriculum
11. Staff Development
12. Educational Research Skills
13. Student Guidance, Management and Development

The thirteen domains are listed in rank order to reflect frequency of appearance of these domains and their

sub-domains in the thirty-three (33) major resources cited in the bibliography.

Secondary domains (categories) are subsumed under each domain in the complete Research-Based Synthesis of Domains for Supervisor/Administrator Staff Development.

4. Field Testing

The repetitive appearance of the thirteen primary and secondary domains in the literature presents strong evidence for their inclusion in the knowledge base for supervisor/administrator staff development. It was decided to field test this material using the following strategy.

A survey instrument will be administered to the Executive Board, Council of Supervisors and Administrators consisting of experienced supervisors. Respondents will:

--Assign an importance value from "A" (least important) to "E" (most important) for each of the thirteen (13) primary domains for supervisor/administrator staff development.

--Indicate whether they believe that each primary and secondary domain is unnecessary for inclusion, an elective or should be a required element of a supervisory staff development program.

The survey instrument will then be administered to a representative sample of new supervisors/administrators. Data will be analyzed and reported using a t-test.

5. Implementation Suggestions

An analysis of data gathered from the administration of the Inventory of Staff Development Priorities to experienced and new supervisors will assist persons designing a supervisory staff development program in determining which domains to include as the knowledge base. Once the program is designed, personnel leading workshops or other staff development activities will be able to refer to the bibliographic citations under each domain as a resource for materials to be utilized in training sessions.

Current research in the field of supervisor induction comments on the fact that few new principals have received significant on-the-job-training prior to beginning their assignments and that in-service programs are rarely comprehensive (Andrews, 1991, p. 3). It is proposed that the knowledge base included in this study serve as the foundation for a comprehensive induction program for new supervisors and administrators in New York City.

Rather than list the variety of strategies that may be employed as part of a supervisor/administrator staff development program, the authors determined that it would be more useful to develop a series of guidelines to assist in program design.

5.1 Guidelines for the design of a supervisor/administrator staff development program

--Provide a scientifically validated knowledge base as the program foundation. (Hallinger, 1991, p. 517)

--Utilize practitioners (in-service and retired) in the delivery of the knowledge base.

--Stress good practice that is relevant to on-the-job performance and that focuses on skill development and problem-based learning experiences.

--Involve supervisor/administrator trainees in the planning and governance of professional development activities.

--Integrate research findings with on-the-job knowledge of administrators.

--Include systematic evaluation by training participants.

--Focus on training that stresses outcomes rather than just delivery of services.

--Organize trainees into small cohort teams, under the supervision of experienced mentors, for the purpose of arriving at solutions to real supervisor/administrator problems.

--Utilize a variety of instructional strategies to include:

Peer observation

Simulations

Case studies

Peer analysis of leadership behaviors in a non-judgmental setting

Presentations by experts

Mentorship

Cross-school visitation

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